

# **Virginia Saltwater Recreational Fishing Development Fund Evaluation of a Proposal for the Development of a Tangible Structure, Facility or Educational Program**

**Project Number:** K

**Date:** March 2, 2007

**Title:** Quinby Harbor Boat Ramp and Harbor Renovation

The Virginia Saltwater Recreational Fishing Development Fund is to be used solely for the purpose of conserving and enhancing finfish taken by recreational anglers, enforcing laws and regulations related to natural resource conservation, improving recreational fishing opportunities, administering the Virginia Saltwater Fishing Tournament program, obtaining necessary data and conducting research for fisheries management, and creating or restoring habitat for species taken by recreational fishermen.

Code of Virginia, Section 28.2-302.3

## **A. Project Purpose**

### **1. Does the project meet statutory guidelines for funding?**

This project clearly meets statutory guidelines for funding, since its sole purpose is to improve recreational fishing opportunities by providing improved and expanded access for saltwater fishermen.

### **2. Does the project fulfill a real need and/or provide a substantial benefit to the saltwater recreational fishery?**

This project fulfills a real need of the saltwater recreational fishery. Public access facilities (ramps & piers) are necessary to provide the means for recreational fishermen to access Virginia's abundant fishery resources. With increasing amounts of waterfront property in private ownership and with the increasing value of waterfront land, the provision of quality, long-term access sites with adequate parking by the private sector is likely to continue its downward trend creating a critical need for public access for the future of recreational fisheries.

**2. Does the project provide its main, or substantial, benefits within Virginia territorial waters or the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries – areas where the saltwater license is required?**

This project provides all of its benefits on the seaside of Virginia's Eastern Shore, an area where a saltwater fishing license is required.

**B. Project Analysis**

**1. What are the project's strengths?**

The major strength of this project is its location. The Quinby harbor is a sheltered body of water providing excellent access to the seaside waters along the middle portion of Virginia's Eastern Shore. The harbor is a functioning facility with a reasonable amount of land to provide the parking infrastructure necessary to support a ramp and slip facility. A site visit on February 20<sup>th</sup> showed a sheltered harbor which provided almost immediate access to a marked channel that runs directly to Quinby Inlet.

The oral presentation to the RFAB in January made note that plans submitted included "pervious" material in parking areas which were more costly than impervious materials, and cost savings in this area are available. This reviewer believes the use of environmentally preferred materials should be encouraged throughout this type of project, especially one funded with license revenues, and pervious materials to lessen the impact of runoff should be included in the project.

**2. What are the project's weaknesses?**

There are a few areas of concern with this funding request.

First, the ramp placement immediately at the end of SR727 would seem to create the potential for a traffic bottleneck at peak times of launching and retrieving boats. Any change in placement of the existing ramp would require a substantial redesign of the harbor facility, but this reviewer would like to know if this option has been explored. Given the wetlands and private ownership of land around the harbor, this reviewer did not locate a better ramp siting location. Traffic flow of cars and cars with trailers will be an issue; well-planned and well-marked traffic patterns adjacent to the launching facility should be a part of this plan. If there are county rights-of-way, expanding the width of SR727 at its terminus might be considered.

Second, planning for the future seems to be lacking in this proposal. The population of the Eastern Shore is increasing at a very rapid rate with one of the main attractions the water access. The usage of this facility will increase dramatically in a short period of time. Parking is provided for only 24 cars with trailers (11 primary, 13 overflow). What provisions are available for additional parking now, and what plans are the town and county making to acquire additional land for future utilization of this facility. The current ramp is a single lane ramp; has there been consideration of expanding the ramp size and constructing a two-lane ramp to facilitate

launching and retrieving. This might cause the loss of a couple of boat slips, but might provide the better access for a larger number of people. Where are the town and county looking for additional parking. In short, the utilization of this facility is likely to outstrip its size soon – long before the life of the planned improvements.

Third, the fishing pier is a nice amenity for anglers without boats, however two issues must be raised. First, the pier will be located entirely within the narrow opening to the harbor. This reviewer wonders about the quantity and quality of the fishing opportunity there and the potential for conflicts with boats departing and returning to the harbor. Second, the fishing pier is really just a floating dock (no railings, benches, or other amenities normally associated with a fishing pier) and the main part of the fishing pier will only be 12 feet by 30 feet in size. In essence, it is really just a dedicated part of dock for fishing and crabbing. Is the expenditure of \$78,000+ a good investment for the proposed structure; and, are there any alternatives for a better structure for anglers without boats.

### **C. Project Budget**

- 1. Is the budget realistic and reasonable for 1) the size and type of project proposed; 2) the number of people likely to benefit; and 3) the area benefiting from the project considering the area's number of saltwater fishermen and license sales?**

The total cost of this project is large, but realistic and reasonable. A large number of people are likely to benefit, and the size and scope of the project justify expenditure of a sizeable sum of money for a good ramp facility at this site. The question remains, however, whether adequate parking is available and about planning for future usage increases.

- 2. What is the local commitment to the project (cost sharing, future management and maintenance, in-kind commitments of personnel, etc.?)**

The Accomac County is contributing the 25% requirement of the proposed total project cost. The local commitment meets MRFAB guidelines.

### **D. Provide an overall evaluation of the project, including a numerical ranking of the project on the "Score" scale provided.**

This is a project that will fulfill a real need, will provide a good benefit to Virginia's recreational fishermen, and will receive a large amount of use. The Quinby Harbor is an ideal site for an updated ramp and boat slip facility; the town and county should seriously consider future use potential and plan for expansion of this facility in the future. Waterfront land values are surely going to take the private sector out of the business of providing ramps and boat slips, with their large needs for parking infrastructure, in the future. Planning for expansion, including land acquisition of adjacent property if necessary, should begin now.

<b>SCORE (Circle One)</b>	<b>Poor</b>					<b>Fair</b>						<b>Excellent</b>
	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>[9]</b>		<b>10</b>